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PRACTICE vs. PRECEPT.

Of what use is it to teach the rules of Grammar in a school, where the constant practice is anti-grammatical? Suppose a child to be taught that the verb must agree with its nominative case, and at the same time to be allowed to say,—in addition, for example,—that 5 and 5 is 10; or, in multiplication, that 6 times 6 is 36, 6 times 7 is 42, and 3 to carry, is 45, &c. It is far from being uncommon to hear the grossest violations of good English, even in parsing an English sentence; e. g. “one verb is connected to another, by a conjunction;” or, “men and women is nominative to are;” or, “some possessives *h’ant* no apostrophe;” or, “which agrees to its antecedent;”—or to practise elision in this style,—“badly ’s an adverb, qualifies sung;” “sung ’s a verb, ’grees to choir;” “tune ’s a noun, ’jective case, third person, sing’lar,” &c. &c.

Perhaps there are more stereotyped errors in expressing arithmetical relations, than in any other of the common branches. In division, we are pained by hearing the phrases, “4 into 16, 4 times; 4 into nothing, not once; 4 into 1 you can’t, but 4 into 15, 3 times, and 3 remains.” *Aught* is still shamefully used for *nought*.

Expressions cast in the same mould of error with the following are common: He had a good horse for his journey; he travelled *forty* and *fifty* miles a day. Well, *ninety* miles would be extraordinary travelling, with a horse of flesh and blood. “*These kind* of things” is another detestable vulgarism. A teacher should be particularly attentive to everything of this kind. It is his especial duty to form his pupils to habits of good English, good grammar and good pronunciation. Indeed, it is not too much to say, that at the close of a three months’ school, if the pupils have been in regular attendance, a teacher is responsible for any errors of the kind above alluded to, that may prevail in his school.

TIME is so precious that there is never but one moment in the world at once, and that is always taken away before another is given.

IN our last number we published several speeches, made at the New York State School Convention. At the same Convention, reports were made on a variety of important subjects, by different committees. We make extracts below, from two of these reports, which are of uncommon value.

METHODS OF TEACHING.

Your committee consider the following position as generally acceded to by enlightened educators, namely: That every individual of our race is endowed with an inherent desire for knowledge; and that this hungering of the mind for mental aliment is as imperious as that of the body for necessary food. It follows, therefore, if the right course be pursued, that the acquisition of actual knowledge by the young, whether in the family, the field, or the schoolroom, *must yield delight*; and such, it is believed, would be uniformly the case if a judicious and correct system of early culture were pursued. It is believed, too, that, were this so, the word TASK would be stricken from its application to lesson-getting, and that the hill of science would no longer be represented as rugged and repulsive in its ascent; and as paying the *weary pilgrim* for his toil only when he had reached the splendid temple which crowns its top. It is also believed that to induce pupils to advance, they need not be stimulated by proffers of gain, by fear, or by the wish to excel others; and that the common use of these incentives has been productive of infinite harm in the school education of children. Your committee believe that much injury has resulted from the very common practice of attempting to *crowd* instruction upon the mind when not in a fit state for reception. All know the effect upon the *body* of *urging* it to take unrelished food,—it but *increases the loathing*. The same is true of the mind when the mental appetite is dull, when it does not appetize the mental dish urged upon it. Pressing the mind under such circumstances to receive instruction, is the sure way to make it reject and detest it. It is a principle of our common nature to repel what is officiously obtruded upon us against our will, and to cling to that which is bestowed as a favor and held by sufferance. Instruction, instead of being *forced* upon the pupil as a *task*, should be *granted* as a *boon*. If this be judiciously done, the pupil will cling to his lesson as to the toy which he is fearful will be taken by his associate. The constant injunctions heard in our schoolrooms of “attend to your books,” “sit still there,” &c. &c., are enough to make the most inquisitive pupil hate his lesson and the most quiet one restless upon his seat.

Your committee are fully impressed with the opinion that the “pleasure of acquiring should be made the incentive to acquire;” and that it is the perception of *truth*, the attainment of actual *knowledge* only, which can yield this pleasure to the young, or to any uncontaminated mind. Letters and words, as such, are uninteresting to all children; and it is only when these letters and words are the medium of knowledge that the

young mind will interest itself about them. Observe the child when engaged in reading mere *letters*. The eye is spiritless; the features are devoid of any expression; and the same is apparent when unmeaning *words* are read. *There is no pleasure for the young being in such employment.* But a significant, a *familiar word* gives an idea, touches the spring of thought, and the whole body is at once enlivened with intellectual light.

In a course of *school* education the alphabet first claims attention, and upon the manner in which this and the earlier reading lessons are taught, depends, in a great degree, the future *love* of the child for books and his subsequent mental action as connected with them. The first lessons should be so given as to excite thought and delight the mind; but a directly counter effect has been more commonly produced,—that of stifling thought and disgusting the mind; and this mental inactivity and indifference have often been kept up so long, upon the alphabet and spelling columns, as to become a fixed habit, following the pupil through his subsequent school course.

It is suggested, therefore, that the alphabet be taught in all cases by familiar words, of not more than three letters; that the words thus selected be present, if possible, in some form, to the eyes of the whole class at once. The teacher then converses with his class about the object which the word represents, and, if he can, draws a plain outline of it on the blackboard; the letters are then named by the teacher and pupils and the word pronounced. Sometimes the *powers* of the letters are given at the same time, and this is deemed the most rational and practical way of teaching this department of Orthography. As soon as a few words are learned in this way, a short sentence is introduced, which is read and copied as before, not only in Roman, but, as the pupils advance, in script also. The practice of writing the words, and drawing the objects which they represent, is not only an amusement, but it furnishes also an admirable safety-valve for the egress of that buoyant energy which so commonly vents itself in mischief. The interest excited in a class by an exercise so conducted, is truly gratifying. No difficulty whatever is found in teaching ordinary pupils, of proper age, three letters a day, and your committee have known frequent instances in which the alphabet has been taught in a week, and in some cases in four days, by the method named.

The practice of *imitative* drawing by the younger, and perspective and landscape drawing by the more advanced pupils, is strongly recommended. The outline maps now found in most of our schoolrooms, furnish admirable models for imitation. The daily practice of devoting some twenty minutes by the *whole school* to drawing certain portions of them, is earnestly recommended.

Mental Arithmetic ought, in the opinion of your committee, to be a daily exercise of every pupil, whether primary or advanced. Its importance, when rightly taught, is universally admitted. It is believed, however, that to place a book on this subject in the hands of the pupil, is not the most successful

method of teaching it. The teacher's mind, well stored with the principles of the "First Lessons," or some similar work, is considered as decidedly the best book for the whole school. He should draw his examples from his own mental magazine, adapt them to the capacity and taste of the pupil, and require him to work them *impromptu*. This is the manner in which mental operations are usually performed. But if a book is placed in the hands of the pupil, he adopts a slow mental habit, solves his examples by counting his fingers, making marks, &c., to aid the mind. In this slow way the answer is obtained, and this is held in the memory and carried to the recitation seat rather than the solution itself. In this way mental arithmetic, as a mental discipline, is of no more value than written arithmetic.

ON THE CHARACTER AND DEPORTMENT OF TEACHERS.

That the teacher of a district school should be noted for strict moral honesty, unbending integrity, and purity of character, few, at this day, doubt. That his principles should be such as the scholars may safely adopt, his language such as they may repeat, and his habits such as they may imitate, is also admitted by all who have reflected on the all-controlling influence of the teacher.

The *deportment* of a school teacher, his personal appearance, his habits, his address, and everything connected with his manners, are not trifling matters in his qualifications. For, let a teacher be possessed of intellectual knowledge, and even moral honesty; yet if he is uncouth, slovenly, or in the habit of violating the ordinary principles of decorum, it destroys in a great measure his usefulness.

The teacher should be neat in his personal appearance; he never should permit himself to go into school in a slovenly, slipshod attire. Some teachers seem to feel, because they have none but *children* in the school, that it is not necessary to pay any attention to their dress or manners. But the truth is, that the children imitate the teacher in all things. *Extremes*, also, should be avoided. The teacher should equally shun the example of the dandy and the sloven. The teacher should be comely in his appearance, neat in his apparel, and a perfect gentleman in his school.

The *address* of a teacher is also important. His language should be kind, and his manners conciliatory and pleasing. An abrupt, harsh, or fretful manner in answering the questions of scholars or parents, is well calculated to destroy all his usefulness.

The teacher should be correct and pure in his language. No vulgar expression or *cockneyism* should ever escape his lips. Your committee have often been pained, when visiting schools, at the frequent use, by the teacher, of cant phrases, vulgar terms, and opprobrious epithets, such as serve to *belittle* the language, cultivate impure thoughts, and implant coarse and brutal passions. Instead of this, the words that fall from the lips of the teacher should be pure, elevated, and kind. His object should be to *elevate* the language of the scholars, not

degrade it. His words should be culled with care, and the choicest only used. He must remember that water in a receiver will not rise higher than the fountain; and that the scholars will seldom use better language than their teacher.

The teacher should always *mean* what he says. The scholars should learn that the teacher *always* speaks the truth. Many teachers are in the constant habit of *threatening* their scholars with punishment for violations of their rules, when they *intend* to do no such thing. The first case of this kind that the teacher is guilty of, is followed by a loss of the confidence and respect of the scholars. They see that their teacher is not a man of his word,—that he threatens and does not perform,—in short, that he has been guilty of falsehood. This course soon results in anarchy and confusion.

The teacher should not be *fretful*. Our mental and physical frames are so intimately connected, and are influenced by so many circumstances, that we cannot always feel alike. We are irritable at times, everything goes wrong, and everybody does wrong; and woe be to the urchin who comes within reach of the irritable teacher's rod or ferule. Severe mental or physical toil, deprivation of sleep, or certain states of the atmosphere, produce nervous irritability. Teachers under this morbid state should be very careful how they act. They should *strive* to wear a pleasant countenance, make use of kind and cheerful language, even though they feel the reverse. The scholars should not be able to "read the day's disasters in the morning's face." Scholars act as spies upon their teacher. Every word, look or action is criticized. And although teachers may not feel that

"A chiel's among them taking notes,
And faith he 'll print 'em,"

yet they may consider themselves as extremely fortunate if they escape without condemnation for every wrong they commit. Children soon learn to distinguish right from wrong. They have a quick perception of injury or partiality. Teachers should study their own physical being, so as to be able to detect the difficulty, and apply the remedy.

A gentlemanly and polite manner in his intercourse, with both parents and scholars, is requisite and important in a teacher. Good breeding adds much to the pleasures of social life, and is always a passport to respectable society. It is an ever present letter of introduction. This ought then to be taught in our Common Schools. And it cannot be successfully taught, unless it is *practised* by the teacher.

The advocates and patrons of select schools give as a reason for their course, that the children in *Common Schools* contract vicious practices and vulgar habits; that no attention is paid to manners or morals; nothing done to elevate and refine the minds of the scholars or improve their manners. This ought not to be. The teacher of the district school should be as refined and polished in his manners as the teacher of the more select school; and he should be even more assiduous to improve his scholars in these respects.

Teachers of youth should not contract vulgar or filthy habits. Chewing or smoking tobacco, taking snuff, or any such disgusting practice, ought to be avoided by him who is held up as a pattern for the youth of the land. Too many teachers are in the habit of using this filthy weed; and boys, thinking it manly to imitate the teacher, strive to become masters of the art. One of your committee has found schoolhouses so full of tobacco smoke, as to make it almost impossible to breathe in them; and one teacher was so addicted to the practice, as to smoke even during school hours. These habits, when once formed, become a "second nature,"—the victims, like the victims of alcohol, find themselves bound as with fetters of brass.

That these practices are of no use,—do not increase the happiness or improve the health of any; but that they are in most cases positively injurious to health, and in all cases expensive, inconvenient, filthy and disgusting,—all are ready to admit. Grave bodies of clergymen have been refused admittance into some of our best furnished churches, to transact business, on account of the prevalence of this loathsome practice among them. Many of our country churches look like the bar-room of some low tavern, by the use of this weed. No place is too pure, no temple too holy, to escape pollution from the tobacco chewer. The common bar-room, the private dwelling, and even the sanctuary of the living God, equally give evident tokens of his presence. And the evil is wide-spread. We are called "a nation of *spitters*." Who shall set about reform? Who can be as successful as those who implant principles, and form the tastes and habits of the young? Let the practice be abandoned by teachers, let them use their influence to prevent their scholars from forming the habit, and let them show its expense, its inconvenience, and its disgusting features, and the evil will soon be greatly lessened.

NATIONAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN IRELAND.

THE Newry Telegraph publishes a lengthened report drawn up and signed by the Rev. Daniel Bagot, Vicar General of Newry and Morne, and the ministers of the Presbyterian and Independent bodies in that town, setting forth in very temperate language the results of a personal inspection of five National Schools in the neighborhood, and conveying the expression of their unanimous opinion, founded on actual observation, of the beneficial working of the government system of education. They speak of, 1. The perfect liberty of conscience enjoyed by persons of all denominations under the national system. There is no restriction whatever placed by this system upon the free use of the word of God; while there is no compulsion or restraint employed in order to force any children to read the Bible against the will of their parents and guardians; and those children whose parents object to their joining the scripture class are not on that account debarred or precluded from receiving such a useful education in other respects as will enable them

to earn an honest livelihood in after-life. And thus, also, by means of this education, though these children are not made to read the Bible, they are made able to read it.

2. Though the Roman Catholic children are not permitted by their parents, in many instances, to join the scripture class, it is not to be therefore concluded that they are not receiving, to a great extent, a good religious education. On this point our attention was particularly arrested. It is impossible for children in the national schools to read in regular rotation the five lesson books which have been provided by the Board without having imbibed a large amount of sound religious information. These books contain religious truth to such an extent that we might cull and compile from them a complete system of pure divinity.

3. It is impossible to overrate the incomparable excellence of these books; there is not a sentence in any one of them which does not convey some valuable information on some useful and important subject of general knowledge. The necessary effect of the national system of education must be to elevate the intellect of the Irish people to an inconceivable degree.

4. We could also see the good effects of a united system of education. Children of all denominations were joining harmoniously in their several classes, while lessons of Christian charity and good will were inculcated in every school. In this respect we anticipate the happiest results from the progress and diffusion of the national system.

In asserting these positions, we do not mean to say that the system, as a whole, is perfect. No human system can be so. Perhaps it is not even the best that could be devised for the education of the children of this country. But it has much, very much, good in it; and though it compels none to read the word of God, it yet leaves it free and open to all who choose to do so. On the whole, we feel it to be our duty, as ministers of the religion of Christ, to avail ourselves of the advantages for education which this system supplies, and to lend our best exertions to promote its efficiency as a means of diffusing the inestimable blessing of a sound, a liberal, and, we say advisedly, a religious education over the length and breadth of the land.

AN APPEAL IN BEHALF OF PUBLIC EDUCATION.

"Did you ever see that ragged little straggler?" "Yes, God help him," said my companion. "God help him!" With such easy adjuration do we leave thousands and tens of thousands of human souls to want and ignorance; doom them, while yet walking the path of guiltlessness, to future devils,—their own unguided passions. We make them outcasts, wretches, and then punish, in *their* wickedness, our own selfishness, our own neglect. We cry, "God help the boy," and hang the man.

Yet a moment. The child is still before us. Can we not

see around it,—contending for it,—the principles of good and evil?—a contest between the angels and the fiends? Come hither, statesmen; you who live within a party circle; you who nightly fight some miserable fight; continually strive in some selfish struggle for power and place, considering men only as tools,—the merest instruments of your aggrandizement;—come here, in the filthy street, and look upon God's image in its boyhood! Consider this little *man*. Are not creatures, such as these, the noblest, grandest things of earth? Have they not solemn natures, are they not subtly touched for the highest purposes of human life? Come they not into this world to grace and dignify it? There is no spot, no coarser stuff in the pauper flesh before you, that indicates a lower nature. There is no felon mark upon him, no natural formation indicating the thief in its tiny fingers, no inevitable blasphemy written upon its lips. It lies before you a fair, unsullied thing, fresh from the hand of God. Will you, without an effort, let the grand fiend stamp his fiery brand upon it? Shall it, in its innocence, be made a trading thing by misery and vice?—a creature driven from street to street, a piece of living merchandise for mingled beggary and crime? Say! what, with its awakening soul, shall it learn? What lessons whereby to pass through life, making an item in the social sum? Why, cunning will be its wisdom, hypocrisy its truth, theft its natural law of self-preservation. To this child, so nurtured, so taught, your whole code of morals, nay, your brief right and wrong, are written in stranger figures than Egyptian hieroglyphics; and,—time passes,—and you scourge the creature never taught, for the heinous guilt of knowing nought but ill! The good has been a sealed book to him; and the dunce is punished with the jail. Doubtless there are great statesmen; wizards in bullion and bank paper; thinkers profound in cotton, and every turn and variation of the markets abroad and at home. But there are statesmen yet to come, statesmen of nobler aims, or more heroic action; teachers of the people, vindicators of the universal dignity of man; apostles of the great social truth that knowledge, which is the spiritual light of God, like his material light, was made to bless and comfort all men. And when these men arise,—and it is worse than weak, it is sinful to despair of them,—the youngling poor will not be bound upon the very threshold of human life, and made, per force, by want and ignorance, life's shame and curse. There is not a babe lying in the public street on its mother's lap,—the unconscious mendicant to ripen into the criminal,—that is not a reproach to the state; a scandal and a crying shame upon men who study all politics save the politics of the human heart.—*Literary Messenger*.

BLACK SOULS.—An officer of the United States Frigate *Constitution*, writing from the island of Zanzibar, says:

“Zanzibar contains a population of 30,000 souls, mostly black.”

DRAWING.

LESSON SIXTEENTH.

For this lesson, set the six blocks, H, D, Q, R, S and F. Block F leans upon Qd, so that one corner of F is concealed. Place yourself so far to the right that you see the profile of block Rc no broader than exactly the sixth part of its front face.

Block He.

Place the point 74 on this block one inch from the lowest, and as far from the left edge of your paper. Then draw the front face of He. It is a square. Draw the front face of block Db.

Points 14, 1 and 55.

You determine these points as, in the 12th lesson, points 5 1 and *n* are determined on block Dc.

Point 64, (Block He,)

Is determined as point *p* on block Fb, lesson 14.

Block Qa.

Point 67 lies opposite 55 horizontally and half as far from 55 as 1. Point 54 stands perpendicularly over 1 and as far from 1 as 55 does. Point 68 lies perpendicularly over 67 and horizontally opposite 54. Now draw the front face of

Block Sa.

The point 94 on this block lies exactly in the middle between 54 and 68. How often is the height contained in the length? Exactly four times.

Block Rc.

Point 93 is first to be determined. It lies as far from 95 as 68 from 94 (on Block Qa.) Draw the whole front face of this block.

Point 86, (Block Qa.)

This is determined like *v* in lesson 7, (Block Ha.)

Point 52

Is also found like 64 on block Ha. Now determine on block Sa points 62 63, and 96.

You will find these three points like the points 5 1 and *n* on block Dc, in the 12th lesson.

Point 59

Will be found like 1 on block Db.

Point 56

Will be found like 55 on block Db. Now we come to

Block Fd.

On this block the point with which it touches block Qa is first to be determined. You need merely observe how far it lies above or below 1, on block Db.

Point 78.

For this point you have merely to observe how many times the distance of 78 from *cc* is contained in line 86 *cc*, (*cc* is marked upon *Qa*.) Mark the place in *cc* 86, and draw horizontally to the right.

Point 88.

Hold the thread perpendicularly before 88, and see where it cuts line *cc* 78. Mark this point in line *cc* 78, and draw from it perpendicularly down to the last drawn horizontal. There is point 88.

Point 89.

Draw from 88 to the right horizontally till below 78. Then hold the thread perpendicularly before 89, and see how many times the distance of the thread from 78 is contained in line 78 *cc*. Mark the place of the thread opposite 78, and draw from this point perpendicularly down till you reach the horizontal line drawn from 88. Where these lines meet is point 89.

Point 20.

Hold the thread horizontally before 20, and see what is its distance above *cc*.

Mark the place of the thread over *cc*, and draw from this point to the right horizontally. Then hold the thread perpendicularly before 20, and see in what part it cuts the line *cc* 78; and draw from it upwards perpendicularly to the horizontal line. Where both meet is point 20.

Point *o*.

Draw horizontally to the right from 20 till over 78. Then hold the thread perpendicularly before *o*, and see how many times the distance of the thread from 78 the line 78 *cc* contains, &c.

Point *p*.

Hold the thread horizontally before *p*, and see where it cuts line 78 89. Mark this point in line 78 89, and draw from it to the right horizontally. Then hold the thread perpendicularly before *p*, and see how many times its distance from 89, the line 89 88 contains. The rest you know.

A WORD TO MOTHERS.—Mothers, never frighten your children; never shut them up in a dark place, or threaten to. Never tell *white lies* to startle and terrify their tender imaginations. It is not only cruel in itself, but it produces a feeble, excitable state of mind, that may be as lasting as life. Early impressions should always be such as may be profitably retained in all future time. You had much better scold your children than scare them; and you had better whip them than scold; and you had better *instruct* them than do either. The practice of alarming them into obedience by fictitious stories and frightful allusions to bears, witches, ghosts and goblins, cannot be too severely reprehended. These things have a paralyzing influence on the mind, which very few, if any, ever perfectly outgrow, and they create false impressions that no reasoning can ever fully eradicate.

COMMON SCHOOLS IN LOWER CANADA.

On the 29th day of March last, an Act providing for the establishment of Common Schools throughout the Province of Lower Canada, was passed by the Canadian Parliament.

It provides that townships, parishes, &c., shall elect as many school commissioners as they may contain school districts, provided that the whole number shall not be less than five, nor more than nine. These officers are to hold their offices for three years, but one third, as near as may be, are to go out every year. No school teacher shall be a commissioner. In townships and parishes where two thirds of the population belong to one religious persuasion, the *curé* or residing minister of that persuasion shall be, *ex officio*, one of the school commissioners. The commissioners are to hold all school property, to build and repair schoolhouses, hire teachers, assess upon the inhabitants as much in taxes as is received from the Common School fund, fix fees for pupils, not exceeding one shilling and three pence per month, in Common Schools, (from which fee the children of indigent parents may be exempted;) but in model schools the fee may be higher. By a model school is meant one of a higher order, like our town high schools.

If a portion of the parents are of a different religious denomination from the majority, they may draw their portion of the school money and keep a school by themselves.

School visitors are to consist of the resident clergyman, of whatever denomination, the Judges, the members of the Legislature, the Justices of the Peace, the Mayor or Warden of the municipality, the Colonels, Lieutenant Colonels, and Majors, and the senior Captain of the militia, and the Superintendent of Schools, who shall be visiter of all schools *ex officio*. The schools are to be visited once at least in each year.

A Superintendent is to be appointed by the Governor, to hold his office during pleasure, with a salary of five hundred pounds, and an allowance of one hundred and fifty for a clerk. He is to receive and distribute moneys; prepare, print, and distribute blank forms, "recommendations and advices on the management of schools;" examine and control school accounts, and make an annual detailed report to the Legislature on the actual state of education in Lower Canada, with statistical tables, &c.

The Superintendent of Schools, J. B. MEILLEUR, Esq., in his circular to school officers, has, among many others, the following directions:

"The teachers of Elementary Schools ought to be able to teach correctly to read and to write, Arithmetic to the Rule of Three inclusive, the elements of Grammar and of Geography, commencing with that of Canada, after the first general notions of the science have been taught.

"With respect to the teachers who will have to preside over Model Schools, they should be able to teach, besides reading and writing, the French and English Grammars by principle, Geography, the Rudiments of History, and of the Epistolary Art,

Arithmetic in all its parts, Linear Design and Book-keeping. It would also be very desirable to exercise the pupils in declamation, as well public as private.

"In the Model Schools, the children should be exercised in composition, above all in the epistolary art. Nothing, indeed, can more efficaciously contribute to train young men to useful habits of business than to exercise them in the composition of letters upon practical subjects, as well as in the making out of receipts and drawing up promissory notes, in keeping accounts, and in the keeping of journals and books by single and double entry.

"Although the resident visitors in every parish or township are required, at least once in every year, to visit the schools established by virtue of this act, nevertheless the spirit of the law and the interest felt in these schools demand that the commissioners themselves should visit them several times in the course of the scholastic year. They are the more expected to do this, because they are the only persons responsible for the management of the schools placed under their control. It is very desirable that one at least should visit regularly once a month all the schools.

"The commissioners should require the teachers to keep a daily journal, resembling that which was kept under the education act passed in 1831, and which expired in 1836. A form for this journal will be found at the end of these instructions. By the medium of this journal teachers will be able upon occasion to render a satisfactory account as well to the commissioners as to visitors, or to the superintendent, of all matters relating to their schools. A copy of this journal needs not be sent to this office, but only to that of the commissioners, every year.

"The commissioners ought to see that the schools are open for at least eight months each year, with the number of scholars required by law, that is to say, fifteen at the least being present every day. They ought to satisfy themselves, through the means of the daily journal, that the number of scholars prescribed by the law has been present each day at school, and where it shall appear to have been otherwise, cause the teacher to make up for the number of days upon which there shall have been fewer than fifteen children at school, out of the remaining four months of the year.

"The period of four months, in question, are intended to enable the teachers to make up for lost time arising from sickness or absence, and to give the children holidays during the season of field labor, or at any other time, according to circumstances.

"In the interest of education and of the teachers themselves, I feel that I cannot too earnestly exhort them to observe that line of conduct, within the precincts of their schools and in all their social relations, that may be the best calculated to maintain the true dignity of their calling, so that all their actions and words may constitute new claims to consideration. They should be ever mindful that the education which it is their duty

above all things to give to infancy and youth, is a moral education, and that the lessons of morality are taught more by the force of example than by words. Better would it be in most cases to leave a child in his state of ignorance, than receive instruction from the lips of vice; for, although ignorant, his heart would be pure, whereas it would be almost impossible for a child,—so susceptible are children to all impressions,—to remain virtuous, who has daily before his eyes the example of vice. The school teacher of the rural districts should never forget that the eyes of a whole parish are upon him, and that he, more than any other, owes to his fellow-parishioners the example of an irreproachable life. He should remember that a teacher's influence with his pupils is in the proportion of their respect for him, and that their respect is in proportion to that entertained for him by society.

“As children even more than men are influenced by outward appearance, and it concerns the teacher to neglect no means of securing the consideration of his scholars, he should never appear before them but in cleanly and decent attire. I should even recommend, especially to the teachers of model schools, to wear, during school hours, the *academic robe*. I could cite the example of many teachers, who, at my suggestion, have adopted the practice, the excellent effects of which I have myself had the means of judging.”

Upper Canada has a similar system already. Who knows but that Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine may establish a general supervision of their schools, now they are surrounded by States which have done so?

EFFECTS OF KINDNESS.—I am almost convinced that there never yet was an instance, in which kindness has been fairly exercised, but that it has subdued the enmity opposed to it. Its first effort may not succeed any more than one shower of rain can reclaim the burning desert; but let it repeatedly shed the dew of its holy influence upon the revengeful soul, and it will soon become beautiful with every flower of tenderness. Let any person put the question to his soul, whether, under any circumstances, he can deliberately resist continued kindness? and a voice of affection will answer, that good is omnipotent in overcoming evil. If the angry and revengeful person would only govern his passions, and light the lamp of affection in his heart, that it might stream out in his features and actions, he would soon discover a wide difference in his communion with the world. The gentle would no longer avoid him; friends would not approach him with a frown; the weak would no longer meet him with dread; children would no longer shrink from him with fear; he would find that his kindness wins all by its smile, giving them confidence, and securing their friendship.—*Rev. G. H. Montgomery.*

LADIES of fashion starve their happiness to feed their vanity.

OUTLINE MAPS.

MR. EDITOR:—Permit me to say a few words to my fellow-teachers, through your paper, on the subject of outline maps.

The introduction of this valuable auxiliary is the greatest step that has been yet taken in reforming the too long prevalent mode of teaching Geography. The readiness with which these maps have been received, most abundantly shows that teachers and school committees have become thoroughly convinced that the old method of committing geographical text books to memory, made the pupils no better acquainted with the geography of the globe than the swallowing of meat makes them acquainted with the natural history of animals. Since geography was made a regular branch of instruction in our schools, eight or ten generations of pupils have passed through them. Pupil after pupil has toiled day after day, and year after year, in committing words to memory; teacher after teacher has listened to recitation after recitation which he knew would be forgotten, almost as soon as it was recited; and parent after parent has measured the knowledge of his child, not by what he has retained, but by what has passed through him into oblivion; and this solemn mockery has been called teaching and learning geography!

There can be no doubt that, in teaching any science, it is desirable to separate it as far as possible from other sciences, but geography is so intimately connected with history, voyages, travels, and even biography, that it is difficult to say exactly where the line shall be drawn, and what portion of other matter shall be admitted into text books for Common Schools. It is clear that no child should be allowed to study history and the other branches just named, without referring to his Atlas whenever a place is mentioned; but it may be doubted whether the introduction of these subjects into a text-book of geography has hitherto proved beneficial. This failure may have arisen in part from the want of skill in the teacher, who may not have been careful to see that the foreign matter introduced was only intended to interest the pupil in the place to which his lesson related, and not to divert his attention entirely from the topography, as seems too frequently to have been the effect. Who has not often been startled at the fact that pupils, who have gone through large text books, and committed to memory long descriptions of countries or places, have no distinct idea of the place, and but little or no recollection of the description?

A portion of geography is permanent in its very nature, and a knowledge of this will be as valuable a century hence as now. Of this description is all that part of geography which relates to what the Creator has made, the great divisions of land and water, which change not by any ordinary operation of nature, oceans, seas, rivers, &c., continents, islands, mountains, &c. Next to this class, which should be taught at all hazards, comes that part which treats of those divisions made by man, which have something of permanency, and rarely change during the life of any individual; such are the boundaries of states and the location of towns. All this is strictly geography, and there is

enough of this to occupy the time usually devoted to geography in our schools; but the outline map is the best instrument for communicating this kind of knowledge to the child. These maps may be profitably used in reviewing scholars who have used a text book, and this was probably the first intention of those who prepared them. Did they serve no other purpose, this would be important, for, if the teacher does his duty, all that is important in the book will be fixed upon the mind of the pupil. No description of a country will fix its features, unless the country itself is exhibited to the eye; but if, when exhibited thus, such circumstances as make it interesting are related by the teacher, a permanent impression is made, especially if, as he may, the pupil treads over the map a hundred times, instead of going over his atlas once, while going through a large text-book, as has been, and now is the custom of many. If the teacher is at home upon the outline maps, he can lead the class with him, and make them as familiar with the face of the earth as they are with his own. If his mind is well stored, as it ought to be, with history, biography, travels, natural history, geology, &c., he can give a charm to his lessons which no mere reading can impart, and which *rote* must destroy. No book can do this so well as the living teacher.

The mischief has been, that too much extraneous matter has been crowded into the geographical text books prepared for schools, and the consequence has been, such a constant change of books, rendered necessary by the great alteration of successive editions, that parents have naturally asked, what can knowledge be good for that needs such alteration every three or four years? This evil has not arisen from the progressive nature of geographical knowledge, for, excepting in the new States of our own country, few additions are made to what is already known, and the greater part of the changes which take place *here*, are too unimportant to be recorded in a school book.

The chief outline maps now before the public, are those by Pelton and Mitchell, both of Philadelphia. The set published by Mr. Pelton consists of six large maps mounted on rollers, and colored so as to be a suitable ornament for the schoolroom. Mitchell's set consists of twenty-three maps of detached countries, so that their relative situation is not shown as in Pelton's, and they are less imposing in their appearance, and quite inferior in execution. The cost, however, is less. It is to be hoped that these remarks will call the attention of teachers and school committees to the subject, so that the teaching of geography may soon be made a rational, practical and agreeable exercise.

Connected with the use of outline maps, should be the frequent copying of them on the blackboard, slate, and paper. This exercise trains the eye and the hand, and it impresses the outline of the globe most effectually upon the mind, if the exercise be properly performed,—utility and not show being the main object.

In fact, no child should be considered as well instructed in geography, unless he can draw from memory a decent outline of every country in the world. At the Normal Schools, great

attention is paid to this part of instruction, and it is probable that the young missionaries from those important establishments will carry correct notions upon this subject to the remotest districts of the State. The key that accompanies Pelton's maps, contains directions for their use, and, it seems to us, that whatever Geography is used in any school, the outline maps may be appropriately added, and must be of essential service not only to the pupils, but also to the teacher, if he has any enterprise and aptness to teach.

A TEACHER.

SPITTING.—At the late New York State School Convention of County Superintendents, Dr. Potter introduced a little sarcasm upon the universal habit of the Yankee nation, of perpetual *spitting*; and suggested the propriety of commencing with children, if we would exorcise this obnoxious practice from the land. He did not allude to those whose health required the delicate custom of chewing tobacco; they would not come within the purview of his remarks; but with all other classes he thought a reform in this respect might be effected. A person returning from an observation of society in other countries, would be taken with perfect surprise; and would almost be forced to the conviction that the American people were in a state of salivation! The President, and Mr. Woodin, of Columbia, followed in a statement, that one of the rules submitted for the adoption of scholars in their counties, is,—“I WILL NOT SPIT UPON THE FLOOR.”

FROM January 19, 1834, to Dec. 31, 1844, Charles Robbins, master of the House of Correction at South Boston, has had 7686 men and women under his care, and *has never struck a blow*.

SCHOOL BOOKS.

INTELLECTUAL ALGEBRA; or, Oral Exercises in Algebra; for Common Schools; in which all the operations are limited to such small numbers as not to embarrass the reasoning powers, but, on the inductive plan, to lead the pupil understandingly, step by step, to higher mental efforts; adapted to prepare the pupil for the study of written Arithmetic, and designed to be introductory to higher treatises on Algebra. By David B. Tower, A. M., late Principal of the Eliot Grammar School, Boston, and of the Penn. Institute for the Instruction of the Blind; author of “The Gradual Reader, or Exercises in Articulation.”

“Divide and subdivide a difficult process, until your steps are so short that the pupil can easily take them.”—*Abbott's Teacher*.

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